GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:685
ANSWERED ON:27.04.2016
Third Party Auditor
Vanaroja Smt. R.

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways is considering to appoint a third party auditor to look into the maintenance of catering standards and quality in trains;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the quality and standards of catering in trains have reached to a very low level recently; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Railways other than appointing a third party auditor to improve the catering services in trains?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS

(SHRI MANOJ SINHA)

(a) and (b): Railways have decided to conduct Third Party Audit of catering services at periodic intervals by independent and reputed auditing agencies accredited by NABCB (National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies). As per the guidelines issued in this regard, 16 Railway Zones have been divided into four groups with Northern, Eastern, Western and Southern Railways as the nodal Zonal Railway for each group. The nodal zonal railways have been entrusted to empanel these accredited auditing agencies for the third party audit for their respective group of railways.

(c) and (d): Improvement of catering services is an on-going process. In its endeavour to provide quality and hygienic food to the passengers, Railways have developed and operationalized an institutionalized mechanism for monitoring of quality and hygiene of catering services through regular inspections at various levels. The passenger satisfaction levels are also regularly monitored through direct feedback and other means to address catering complaints. The steps taken to improve the quality of food in Railways inter-alia include: (i) Introduction of station based e-catering at all A1 and A category stations for widening the range of options available to passengers for ordering food of their choice. (ii) Introduction of precooked food ('ready to eat' meals) (iii) Operation of centralized Catering Service Monitoring Cell (CSMC) (toll free number 1800-111-321) for prompt redressal of passenger grievances relating to the catering activities and real time assistance to travelling public. (iv) Imposition of penalties in case of deficiencies detected in services. (v) Operation of all India Helpline (No.138) for rail-users to lodge complaints/suggestions regarding food and catering services (vi) A Twitter handle with the address @IRCATERING has also been made operational to cater to the complaints/suggestions with regard to catering services.

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